

Washington, DC – Congressman Wally Herger (R-CA), Ranking Member of the Ways & Means Subcommittee on Health, delivered the following speech before the House of Representatives today in support of dealing with looming cuts to physician payments in Medicare but in opposition to the Democrats' plan to address this by increasing the federal deficit by more than \$200 billion. Currently, Medicare physician reimbursement rates are expected to be cut by 21% next year and by roughly 5% for each of the next several years thereafter, according to the 2009 Medicare Trustees Report. Herger supported an alternative plan put forth by House Republicans that would prevent these cuts but would not saddle future generations with further debt. You can view Herger's speech [here](#) .

“Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of reversing the devastating Medicare cuts for physicians. But I rise in opposition to passing the buck to our children and grandchildren.

“Our government is facing a severe and unprecedented debt crisis. Yet despite the President's pledge that health care legislation won't add one dime to the deficit, we're voting today on a health care bill that adds 2 trillion dimes to the debt while piling trillions of dollars onto Medicare's unfunded liabilities. The American people are tired of these budget games.

“Two weeks ago, 219 members of the Democratic Majority voted to cut Medicare by \$500 billion. We could have taken a fraction of those savings and kept them within Medicare to pay for this much-needed relief for physicians. It would pass with a huge bipartisan vote. But instead, the Majority decided to raid Medicare and spend the plunder on a new government-run health program.

“Republicans will be offering an alternative to ensure that doctors in Medicare are paid appropriately and protect them from frivolous medical lawsuits, all without adding to the debt. I urge the Speaker to stop the political games and allow the House to vote on our responsible solution. It's the right thing to do for our doctors, for our seniors, and for the future of our country.”